



Defense Intelligence Agency's Chief Analytic Methodologist on "The Government's Path to Irrelevance"

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The discourse about and around corporate America has been largely dominated by two closely related topics: competitiveness and the need for a highly-skilled workforce. The private sector appears to be listening and acting with varying degrees of success.

The same can't be said for the federal government, which hasn't changed much since the advent of the Internet and the cell phone. Moreover, most government employees—political and bureaucratic—still tend to think the same way that they always have.

The government mindset, born of less connected times, dictates that the understanding of almost any issue requires breaking the issue down into distinct pieces. This isn't necessarily a bad practice. It can bring useful clarity to many issues. But, when it is misapplied to complex, interdependent issues, this approach can profoundly distort (read oversimplify) the federal government's understanding and handling of major issues. This is a growing problem as globalization continues to create more connections.

Take, for example, climate change—a topic that has taken on renewed urgency given the International Energy Agency's report Monday, which shows a troubling rise in carbon dioxide levels.

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